



A Hartford HealthCare Partner

February 15, 2015

Dear Sen. Gerratana, and Rep. Ritter:

I am writing to ask you to support **SB857 An Act Concerning Licensure for Genetic Counselors**. Over one third of genetic counselors in the U.S. are licensed and many other states are working towards this effort.

Throughout my career as a physician and in my position as the Director of Maternal Fetal Medicine at Hartford Hospital, I have worked with numerous genetic counselors. They are a vital part of the healthcare team that I work with in dealing with high-risk pregnancies.

Genetic counselors provide complex services to women and expecting families during a very vulnerable time of their lives. Imagine you are told the child you carry is at high risk for an inherited disorder. Or you find out prior to pregnancy that you and your spouse both carry a severe, possibly deadly disease that your offspring have a high chance of inheriting. Or you're a young parent and you find that your family has a genetic mutation that may put you at very high risk for developing cancer in the next few years. These are just some of the complex medical situations that genetic counselors deal with on a daily basis.

Our genetic counselors are professionals whose training includes a Master's degree and mandatory continuing education. They provide an important and needed service that would not be possible in our practice and for most of the physicians that I deal with in Women's Health. They have expertise in genetics and genetic counseling and function as an essential member of our health care team.

Genetic counselors have the ability to explain accurately and in easy-to-understand terms, difficult and constantly evolving genetic information to patients; evaluate a complex family history; and, evaluate the need for genetic testing. They provide genetic information in a context of supportive care and sensitivity that is tailored to each patient's/family's particular needs. They keep up-to-date, through their training and continuing education, with advances in genetic technology, refinements in genetic testing and the implications of testing for the individual and their family members.

With the rapid advances in genetic technology, genetic testing and counseling services are quickly moving to the forefront of biosciences. With this in mind, licensure is desperately needed in order to ensure that the quality of these professionals remains high and that the public is afforded the best level of care.

Please support **SB857 An Act Concerning Licensure for Genetic Counselors** so that genetic counselors can get the recognition in Connecticut that they deserve. Thank you for your consideration. I welcome any questions on the value that genetic counselors bring to the health of the people in the state of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Adam F. Borgida".

Adam F. Borgida, MD  
Interim Chair, Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Hartford Hospital